

commonly regarded as a national record; yet Essex seems to do better. Here is a challenge: can you beat Southend?

My second defence witness, or witnesses, are the Nephelidae, because I happen to know the number recorded from each vice-county in the British Isles. Here are the leaders of the first division: — 1. Dorset (VC 9), Mr. Wykes' adoptive county — 75 species; 2. South Hampshire (VC 11) and North Essex (VC 19) — 74 species; 4. West Kent (VC 16) — 73 species; 5. Surrey (VC 17) — 72 species; 6. South Essex (VC 18) — 71 species.

I hope these facts will convince you that Essex produces good moths as well as good cricketers. My advice to the young student and lover of moths is to go to Essex, the entomologically forgotten county, the county of prizes and surprises.

P.S. I have just received from the Rothamsted Research Centre a paper entitled *Perspectives in urban entomology* (ed. G. W. Frankie and C. S. Koehler, 1978). Map 8, although its printing is rather blurred in my copy, appears to show that the mean number of macrolepidoptera recorded in traps between 1968 and 1974 was higher in central Essex than elsewhere in south-eastern England. — A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex. 17.xii.1979.

SYNGRAPHA CIRCUMFLEXA L.: YORKSHIRE Y. — On 29th July 1979 I found in my m.v. trap here a single specimen of a moth since identified for me by Mr. D. Carter of the British Museum (Natural History) as *Syngrapha circumflexa* L.

The species is a native of the Atlantic Islands, Africa and parts of S.E. Europe, its range extending to Asia Minor and Central and Southern Asia. The British Museum possesses examples from many localities over this range, but no British specimen. Its history in Britain can only be described as confused, appearing to rest on a single specimen said by Haworth (1802, *Prodromus*, 16; 1809, *Lep. Brit.*, 257) to have been taken by a Mr. Drury in Essex at some time prior to 1802, and called by him "The Essex Y". Haworth also mentions having seen the moth in two other collections, but gives no particulars, which he would certainly have done if data had been available since he was in dispute with Donovan about the species at the time. E. Donovan (1808, *Brit. Insects*, 12: 53, plt. 412) calls what must have been the same specimen "The Yorkshire Y", stating that it had been captured by Mr. Drury in Yorkshire. This was at once disputed by Haworth, and it appears that Donovan confused the moth with another species. This has been repeated by others, but the moth is not mentioned by Barrett or Meyrick, or in any edition of South.

It appears probable, therefore, that *S. circumflexa* has not been recorded in Britain since 1802. If so, it cannot be a great traveller, and it is perhaps permissible to suggest that the two certain specimens may have taken passage, the one to the Port of London and the other to the Solent. I am grateful to Mr. Carter for identifying the moth. — REAR ADMIRAL A. D. TORLESSE, 1 Sway Lodge, Lymington, Hants.